

# METEOR LAKES BYWAY

The Meteor Lakes Byway showcases North Carolina's fertile farmlands.

**Beginning in Elizabethtown, the Bladen County seat, travel north on N.C. 242 from N.C. 53.**

The county was named for Martin Bladen, the state commissioner of trade and plantations from

1717 to 1746. Elizabethtown, settled in 1773 and possibly named for Queen Elizabeth I, was the site of the 1781 Revolutionary War Battle of Elizabethtown, where Whigs broke the Tories' (colonials devoted to England) power by driving them into a ravine, now known as Tory Hole, along the Cape Fear River.

**Just outside Elizabethtown, cross the Cape Fear River and enter the Bladen Lakes State Forest.** About four miles north of the river is Jones Lake, the closest of the meteor lakes to N.C. 242. Originally named Woodward in 1734 for a local justice of the peace, the lake's name was changed later to Jones in honor of a prominent local landowner.

Jones Lake, as well as White Lake, Singletary Lake and Lake Waccamaw, are known as meteor lakes or Carolina bays. These oval depressions are believed to have been formed by ancient meteor showers. They have gathered water and

decomposed organic material over the years to create the fertile farmlands along this route. With the exception of Lake

Waccamaw, each is located in the Bladen Lakes State Forest.

**From Jones Lake State Park, the byway passes through**

**the Turnbull Creek Valley.** The fields to the right are part of the Big Colly and Cypress Creek bays. On the short drive through Cumberland County, founded in 1754, notice the Big White Pocosin to the left. It was named for the Duke of Cumberland, a son of British King George II, who was successful at the Battle of Culloden. Ironically, the area was settled by Scottish Highlanders, the people defeated by the Duke of Cumberland. **At the Cumberland/Sampson County line, cross the South River and continue to Roseboro.**

Sampson County was named for John Sampson, a member of the House of Commons under North Carolina's royal governors. Roseboro was originally established in 1839 as Owensville. In 1891, the name was changed to honor George Rose, chief counsel for the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railroad. **North of Roseboro, cross Little Coharie Creek**

Photo courtesy of Highway 242 Beautification Committee



Mural in downtown Salemburg